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Fourwalkers, taildanglers, headhangers: labouring animals in *Ulysses*

Peter Adkins

ABSTRACT

This article takes as its broad premise two related questions: how does *Ulysses* register the animal labour from which modernity was produced? And, in turn, how do Joyce's textual innovations—his labouring of language—respond to the human-animal relationships that existed in early-twentieth-century Ireland? Although critics are increasingly attuned to the way in which *Ulysses* is a novel that teems with all sorts of animal life, less attention has been paid to the working animals whose presence would have been part of Joyce's everyday life; animals who are present on the pages of *Ulysses* in the form of draught horses and dairy cows, among others. Focusing predominantly on the figure of the horse, the species which played a central role in the production of the modern city and is perhaps the most frequently represented animal in *Ulysses* other than the human, this article will examine Joyce's alertness to the multispecies history of Irish modernity. Moreover, by looking at the formal innovations through which Joyce presents his equine figures—through, for instance, an instability of focalisation and an attention to material conditions—I will argue that *Ulysses* presents the subjectivity of both humans and nonhumans as produced through moments of affective entanglement. Highlighting moments of trans-species empathy that we find registered in the text's labouring of language, such as Bloom's encounter with the sweeper horse in 'Eumaeus' from which I take my title, this article will outline how working animals are integral to Joyce's task of presenting the everyday fabric of modernity, and that *Ulysses* demonstrates the ethical possibilities and, just as importantly, limitations that come with acknowledging such a fact.

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Towards the end of 'Eumaeus' an exhausted Bloom and Stephen encounter a sorry-looking horse dragging a road-sweeper. Focalised through Bloom, who over the course of *Ulysses* (1922) has been characterised by his regard for Dublin's animals, the horse is described in the verbose Victorian pastiche that characterises the episode as 'a fourwalker, a hipshaker, a blackbuttocker, a taildangler, a headhanger'.[1] As readers inclined to look up these words will

discover, the first three terms are nineteenth-century colloquialisms describing, respectively, a horse whose 'four feet are never coordinated', whose 'one hip [is] lower than another' and who 'is always being overtaken'.[2] The last two nouns—'taildangler' and 'headhanger'—are easier to gloss, examples of freshly-minted compound words that Joyce scattered throughout *Ulysses* and giving a taste of what would be to come in *Finnegans Wake* (1939). The final real, living nonhuman animal that the reader will encounter in the novel, the unnamed horse is, like the language of the episode itself, worn out, anachronistic and, seemingly, destined soon to disappear forever. Both a metaphor for a city caught between tradition and modernity and a depiction of Dublin's animal inhabitants, it provides an example of what Donna Haraway describes as the 'material-semiotic entanglements' through which species relations are forged.[3]

The importance of animals to Joyce's writing, especially in *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*, and his attention and innovation when it comes to animal life has in recent years begun to be acknowledged within the field of Joyce studies. Where once only the semiotic side of Joyce's animals was the subject of analysis, now the material—both in the historical and the biological sense—of his bestiary is also being examined for what it reveals about his oeuvre. While in 2009, David Rando, in a watershed article on Joyce and animals, could justifiably suggest that the Joyce industry 'resemble[d] a factory farm, converting animals into figures as slaughterhouses process animals into food', Joyce's animals *qua* animals are now much more likely to be taken seriously, spurred on by the emergence of the field of animal studies more broadly within the humanities.[4] Yet, while the arrival of animal studies as an interdisciplinary field that critically examines the 'relationship between humans and animals' and 'analyse[s] the history of representations of animality' has offered clear benefits for those retracing and recovering Joyce's interest in nonhuman life, less attention has been paid to the perhaps bolder question of what Joyce can offer to animal studies.[5]

In the spirit of Vinciane Despret, I want to ask the, perhaps, at first strange sounding, question of what Joyce might have to offer to the lives of animals themselves.[6] Or, phrased slightly differently, how might Joyce's text intervene in the way we think about, interact with and live alongside other species? As Mario Oritz-Robles has argued, literature 'helps us imagine alternatives to the way we live with animals, and animals help us imagine a new role for literature in a world where our animal future is uncertain'.[7] In fact, Oritz-Robles goes even further, arguing that the ontological gulf separating humans from other forms of animal life means that 'animals as we know them' are necessarily always a 'literary invention'. Animals, Oritz-Robles shows, can be found in the very oldest forms of literature and are present in the origin myths of most cultures, with the conceptual emergence

of 'the animal' as a category coinciding with the emergence of literatures, cultures and societies.[8] The history of human-animal relations is, in other words, a history of tropes, metaphors, narratives and style in which the idea of the human is as much at stake as the idea of the animal. Indeed, as Jacques Derrida argued, the term 'the animal' is itself inadequate when placed under scrutiny, revealed as an attempt to 'corral a large number of living beings within a single concept' and overlooking the heterogeneity that marks the lives of different species.[9] Such an emphasis on representation, however, does not disregard the lived realities of animal lives, but instead recognises the way in which they have participated in the production of those domains long held to be deeply and uniquely human (literature, culture, civilisation). Yet, while with the emergence of Western Modernity 'the animal' would come to be seen as, in Descartes's famous designation from *Discourse on Method* (1637), a machine without mind, effectively sanctioning their often brutal treatment and allowing them to stand as an 'Other' against which the human could negatively define itself (and, in the process, de-humanise entire human populations deemed closer in proximity to 'the animal'), animal participation in cultural history is not a passive one. Instead, representations have always existed in a state of dynamic relation to the material human-animal interactions from which tropes and figures emerge, develop, calcify, crack and are made new. As this article will go on to consider, the changing relationship between humans and horses in the nineteenth and early twentieth century is an important case in point, playing a crucial role in forging the ideals and realities of modernity. As such, what Haraway calls 'becoming together' can be traced back through the history of literature, not as that which stands outside and merely holds a mirror up to the world of human-animal relations, but actively participating within it.[10]

In this sense, Joyce's personal feelings about animals are less important than how his texts function within this literary history and, in particular, within the context of an historical moment in which new aesthetical modes were being developed to critique the modernity of the early twentieth century and to push beyond earlier forms of textual representation. The status of *Ulysses* as a text suffused with the remnants of canonical literature, intellectual history, popular culture, mass-media and political discourse makes it particularly valuable as a work that might tell us something about our animal past, as well as providing material with which to think about in the present. Recent studies focusing on the genetic development of Joyce's texts have pointed to the sources from which Joyce took ideas about animal life, destined to be repurposed within the body of his novel. Ronan Crowley, for instance, has highlighted the way in which Havelock Ellis's account of zoophilia in his *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* (1898-1908) provided the raw material for Bloom's metamorphosis in 'Circe'.

Yet, when Crowley concludes that the 'thoroughgoing decontextualisation' enacted on the source material leads to a displacement of the original reference, meaning that 'the actual animal is […] all too quickly subjected to anthropomorphism', he underplays the potential for figurative modes of writing to be self-reflexive and to problematise the relationship between reference and referent.[11] As Derek Ryan has argued, figurative language in literature, such as the similes and metaphors through which animals are anthropomorphised, offer moments of 'imaginative possibility' and 'uncertainty', enabling new ways of thinking about animals rather than the kind of self-enclosed anthropocentrism and dematerialisation that Crowley sees in Joyce's process of writing.[12] In a similar vein to Ryan, Jane Bennett has argued that anthropomorphism has the capacity to 'uncover a whole world of resonances and resemblances', offering a form of thinking and knowing that has the potential to undo hierarchical structures.[13] In this sense, it is not only language's mimetic capabilities but its figurative dimensions that might shed light on human-animal relations.

As such, the use of *labouring* in the title of this article refers not only to my focus on Joyce's representation of animal labour in *Ulysses*, such as the sweeper-horse of 'Eumaeus', but also Joyce's labouring of language in his attempt to capture the multi-species milieu of Dublin. Drawing on the definition of labouring to mean to 'work at or consider laboriously or painstakingly; to give careful thought to; to work out in excessive detail; to overelaborate'[14], this article will consider how Joyce examines the exhaustive and exhausted possibilities of language to present and reimagine animal life. Focusing on the horse, I will show how Joyce not only understood the centrality of this species to the development of the nineteenth-century city, and Western modernity more broadly, but that his self-reflexive anthropomorphism foregrounds both the possibilities and limitations within modernist multi-species entanglements. In the various encounters between humans and horses in *Ulysses*, we find Joyce foreshadowing Haraway's instruction to '[take] animals serious as workers without the comforts of humanist frameworks' and exploring what it means to respond to the animals that make up Dublin's more-than-human inhabitants.[15]

Joyce, horses and the modern city

Of all the animals in Joyce's texts, horses have enjoyed the most critical attention. In some respects, this is perhaps unsurprising. As Oritz-Robles states, the horse has appeared as 'a character in all forms of literature from its very beginning' and is 'the only animal after which a major literary genre, and indeed a whole era, is named—the *cheval* (horse in French) of the chivalric romance in the age of chivalry'.[16] Horses are omnipresent in Joyce's writing from the very beginning, too. His epiphanies feature horses among

other creatures and 'I Hear An Army', published in *Chamber Music* (1907) and subsequently anthologised in Ezra Pound's *Des Imagistes* (1914), opens with 'the thunder of horses'.[17] Horses continue to appear in all of Joyce's major works, from *Dubliners* (1914), where, as Richard Gerber points out the title 'Araby' is itself an equine reference[18], to *Finnegans Wake*, where among other horses, we find 'Copenhague-Marengo' (an amalgamation of Wellington's and Napoleon's horses) straining under the weight of a heavy historico-linguistic load.[19] As this brief gallop through some of Joyce's equine figures shows, horses are often freighted with weighty symbolism, associated with military and imperial prowess, as well as classical connotations of civilisation, honour and valour. As Vincent Cheng has argued, Joyce was aware of the cultural associations historically attached to the horse, in which 'status of achieved power was, literally and symbolically, represented by horses' both on the battle ground and in art history.[20] Moreover, Joyce drew on this association in his writing, with equestrian imagery serving to 'elucidate, negotiate, and intertextually elaborate his developing positions and politics about races, empires, and essences'.[21] Horses were not only associated with British Imperial might, of course. Horse racing was a popular spectator sport in both Ireland and Britain, providing a plotline in *Ulysses* in the form of Bloom's inadvertent tip for the Ascot Gold Cup.[22]

The horses that Joyce would have been most familiar with, however, are those described in the over-wrought language of 'Eumaeus' as 'the brutes of the field' (*U* 16.1797) whom modernity had transposed to an urban environment. The nineteenth century had seen an unprecedented increase in the use of horse labour within cities and towns. Horses pulled barges, trams, carriages and carts, transporting humans, commercial and industrial goods, and becoming essential to the organisation and running of city spaces. As historians Clay McShane and Joel A Tarr outline, horses were used by 'teamsters, merchants, factory and workshop owners and managers, streetcar drivers and company officials, and even veterinarians', their presence and labour blending into the background of the urban environment until they were regarded as 'living machines'.[23] The concomitant changes in the morphology of humans, horses and landscapes in this period offer a disturbing example of what Haraway calls 'co-evolution', as horse breeders responded to the ever intensifying demands of industrialisation and urbanisation by breeding larger, heavier breeds of horse at the same time that the human bodies of the labouring class were also changing under the duress of industrial production.[24] Dangerous working conditions ensured that accidents were common. Horses 'collapsing under impossible loads [and] quite literally worked to death on the streets in full view of the public' were not uncommon events and collisions were frequent.[25] Virginia Woolf memorably captures one such a scene in her unfinished memoir, *A*

Sketch of the Past, when describing the late-Victorian London of her childhood:

> The streets were littered with little brown piles of steaming horse dung which boys, darting out among the wheels, removed in shovels. The horses kicked and reared and neighed. Often they ran away. Carriages crashed together. I remember in High Street; horses went sprawling; they shied; they reared; wheels came off. The street rocked with horses and smelt of horses. The horses were often gleaming, spick and span horses […] and among the sounds of the street – the tap of hoofs, the rush of wheels – one heard a jingling and metallic noise as the harness shook and rattled. But only solitary hansoms, or little high butchers carts, or private broughams came clopping down our quiet Hyde Park cul-de-sac – our 'backwater', as father called it.[26]

As Woolf's remarks make clear, the social stratification of London's geography extended beyond humans, with social class determining which horses were able to move through certain neighbourhoods, with horses restricted to the popular thoroughfares and high roads facing the greatest danger. Horses consigned to pulling the large omnibuses had a life expectancy of 'only a year or two' Woolf remembers and, as Elaine Walker outlines in her history of the species, there were 'horrifying tales of knackers yards' where horses were 'kept without food and drink alongside the carcasses of their fellows while they awaited their slaughter'.[27]

There was a colonial dimension to the construction of the 'horse machine', also. The 1893 book *The Horse World of London* by W.J. Gordon claims that the majority of the horses used to pull cabs were bred in Ireland, shipped over from Waterford unshod so as to do 'no damage' on the voyage.[28] Breeds such as the Irish Draught were revered for their strength and in 'Cyclops' the nationalist citizen boasts of 'our farfamed horses even today, the Irish hobbies' (*U* 12.1252-53), a reference to the extinct Irish Hobby, legendary for its strength and revered as the racial origin of subsequent Irish breeds. The raising and breeding of horses contributed to Ireland's colonial economy, part of the supply chain that saw Ireland provide England with animal bodies to be consumed, either in the form of meat or labour. As I have discussed elsewhere, Ireland relied on an industrial agriculture in which the majority of its land was being used for the raising of livestock (mainly cattle) to be sent onto England for slaughter and consumption.[29] There is ample evidence of Joyce's knowledge and interest in the political and social implications to the animal trade between Ireland and England. Bloom's background, for instance, is tied up with this economic history given his past employment as a clerk at Dublin Cattle market on the North Circular Road. We see it also in the impending threat of a possible foot and mouth outbreak referred to throughout the novel. While Mr Deasy's newspaper letter about the zoonotic disease is sometimes read as evidence of a narrow-minded provincialism, an outbreak

of foot and mouth would have likely produced severe economic and political instabilities during a period in which the Union was already weakened. More pertinently for this article, horse trade was just as threatened as the cattle trade by such an outbreak, with Deasy's remark in the letter on the '[p]ercentage of salted horses' among the 'Emperor's horses at Mürzsteg' (*U* 2.333-34) invoking novel treatments in equine medicine as the potential saviour of the agricultural industries propping up Irish colonialism.[30]

The labouring animals that appear in Joyce's texts up until *Ulysses* are present not so much by conscious design but are often working away in the background, contributing to a commitment to a faithful representation of Dublin's urban environments. In 'An Encounter', for instance, we find the protagonist watching 'docile horses pulling a tramload of business people up the hill', an observation, more implicit than Woolf's account, that presents the way in which labouring horses were signifiers of class (especially since Dublin's horse-drawn trams were initially designed to serve the new middle-class suburbs south of the city).[31] The degree to which horses would have been ever-present in other ways finds expression in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) where the odour of 'horse piss and rotted straw' calms Stephen and gives a vivid indication of what must have been a familiar sensation in cities crowded with labouring animals.[32] In contrast, *Ulysses* pays more attention to both the wide variety of labour that horses were needed for and to the species itself. Ironically, however, it does so at precisely the point at which horses were poised to start becoming less visible on Dublin's streets.

The horse-drawn tram, invented by Irishman John Stephenson in New York in 1836, had been introduced to Dublin by the American entrepreneur George Francis Train in 1867, when he lay a section of rails along the Aston Quay. The double decker tram, which was pulled by two horses, first served the aforementioned southern suburbs before expanding into a wider network, adding more horses to streets already crowded with horse-drawn carts, cars and omnibuses. At the turn of the twentieth century, however, Dublin was one of the first European cities to already have an electric tram system. The Dublin South District Tramways Company opened the first electrified route in March 1898 and by the first few years of the new century, Dublin's tram network had rapidly transitioned from horse to electric power.[33] *Ulysses* is set at precisely this point of messy transition between urban space being organised and powered by equine labour and the arrival of the horseless age, and Joyce was highly alert to the changing fabric of the city.[34] The opening of 'Aeolus' presents a chaotic scene of engines and horses competing with one another:

> Before Nelson's pillar trams slowed, shunted, changed trolley, started for Blackrock, Kingstown and Dalkey, Clonskea, Rathgar and Terenure, Palmerston Park and upper Rathmines, Sandymount Green, Rathmines, Ringsend and Sandymount Tower. The hoarse Dublin United Tramway Company's timekeeper bawled them off (*U* 7.1-7)

And a short while later:

> At various points along the eight lines tramcars with motionless trolleys stood in their tracks […] all still, becalmed in short circuit. Hackney cars, cabs, delivery waggons, mailvans, private broughams, aerated mineral water floats with rattling crates of bottles, rattled, rolled, horsedrawn, rapidly' (*U* 7.1043-49)

In the first quotation, while Dublin's electric tram network unfolds from its centre point of Nelson's Pillar, the 'hoarse' call of the human tram-worker ironically draws attention both to the replaced animal labour and the fact that certain bodies are still being used as workhorses. More interesting, however, is the contrast between the apparent stillness, if not inertia, of the modern electric trams and the liveliness of horse drawn transport in the second quotation, in which the horse emerges from the chaos of Sackville Street as a machinic abstraction rather than as an organic animal. The reader is presented with a description of the horse's labour and the force it produces – the rattling, rolling, horsedrawn movement – rather than the animal itself. Similar abstraction can be found elsewhere in *Ulysses*, perhaps most clearly in 'Wandering Rocks' and 'Sirens' where the sounds of horses transporting the viceregal cavalcade and Blazes Boylan, respectively, again signify labouring horses but effaces the animal itself. We see this device deployed, too, in the first half of 'Hades', the first half of which takes place within a horse-drawn carriage, so that although horses are foregrounded through the sound of their hoofs and the 'creaking and swaying' (*U* 6.26-27) movement of the carriage they are also literally peripheral and invisible. The horses' labour becomes the medium through which they are perceived by the men and, by extension, the reader.

A further instructive example of the horse as machinic abstraction can be found in one of the Father Conmee sections of 'Wandering Rocks' where the priest turns his gaze to a 'towhorse with pendent head' (*U* 10.101) pulling a canal barge loaded with turf. Joyce's revisions to the episode show the degree to which the horse's presence as a machinic abstraction was a conscious decision, with the compound words 'haulhorse' and 'bargehorse' written and excised, before arriving at the final designation of 'towhorse' that would make it into print.[35] A series of figurations that all linguistically couple the horse to, and define it by, the labour it performs, Father Conmee sees not a horse but, at various points in the chapter's development, a hauling machine, a barge machine and finally a towing machine. Conmee, who over the course of the episode is characterised by condescension and

sentimentality, is only able to perceive the horse in terms of its labouring function rather than as an animal with an interior life. This extends, too, to the bargeman who is seen by Conmee as sat in an 'idyllic' pose in his 'hat of dirty straw seated amidships, smoking and staring at a branch of poplar above him' (*U* 10.101-3). Unlike the bourgeois men Conmee passes in this section, the bargeman is, like his horse, denied an interiority, with the priest observing a continuity between the labouring man and the labouring animals, both idealised as evidence of 'the providence of the Creator who had made turf to be in bogs whence men might dig it out and bring it to town and hamlet to make fires in the houses of poor people' (*U* 10.104-6). In this moment, the novel's presentation of the horse and its labour further extends McShane and Tarr's designation of nineteenth-century urban horses as 'living machines', presenting a more-than-human assemblage of labourers whose presence is only legible through the labour they perform.[36]

The appearance of the 'towhorse' in 'Wandering Rocks' is not, however, the first instance where readers have encountered this particular horse and bargeman. Moreover, in the contrast between the horse's first and second appearance, we can discern the degree to which Joyce is consciously exploring the invisibility of animal labourers. In 'Hades', as the funeral carriage crosses the Crossguns Bridge over the Royal Canal, we are given the following description: 'A man stood on his dropping barge, between clamps of turf. On the towpath by the lock a slacktethered horse. Aboard of the *Bugabu*. Their eyes watched him' (*U* 6.439-41). The last sentence, typically ambiguous, invites itself to be read either as the funeral party watching the turf cutter or the cutter and his horse watching Bloom, or, even, perhaps both at once. In contrast to the later encounter with Father Conmee, who sees a 'pendent head', suggesting an averted gaze rather than a face to face encounter, this moment between Bloom, the horse and the bargeman presents an unavoidable intersubjective encounter. It comes very shortly after the carriage has been held up by livestock being driven to the quays to be transported to London, 'bleating their fear' and reminding Bloom that '[t]omorrow is killing day' (*U* 10.387-92).[37] Together, these moments produce a gradual heightening of attention in Bloom towards the labouring animals around him and what Cheng calls Bloom's disposition to 'see horses as real entities and individual animals'.[38] When, arriving at the cemetery, a 'team of horses' pass by with 'plodding tread, dragging through the funeral silence a creaking waggon on which lay a granite block', Bloom is able to look beyond the abstract labour to the horse 'with his plume skeowways', wondering if the 'collar tight on his neck, pressing on a bloodvessel or something' is the cause of his 'dull eye' and whether the horses 'know what they cart out [to the cemetery] every day' (*U* 10.507-12). As with his encounter with the bargeman's horse, Joyce presents Bloom as seeing the horse itself *seeing*, recognising their ability to return his gaze, and is registered as

subject as well as object. This not only enables an empathetic insight into the dangerous condition of its labour but leads into the question of whether animals can have a concept of, or a conscious relationship to, death. The notion that animals can be defined by their lack of an understanding of mortality and thereby are kill-able is an idea engrained both within philosophical accounts of human exceptionalism and used to justify the use of animal lives to human ends.[39] The gaze of the animal, however, provokes Bloom to leave open the question that, just as he is going to mourn Paddy Dignam, nonhuman animals might also have a relation to death and thereby an ontological claim to life. It is a moment that undoes human exceptionalism and, necessarily, challenges the reduction of animal labourers to living machines.

In all of the encounters between horses and humans described above, Joyce develops a tension between animals as machines and beings, as visible and invisible, present and absent. It is a tension that extends to questions of representation and misrepresentation, or the degree to which like Conmee, Bloom's encounter with the horses, is distorted by anthropomorphism. After-all, it is only when in the cemetery going to bury his friend that he imagines sad and suffering horses. In 'Lotus Eaters', feeling more equanimous, Bloom sees only '[g]ood poor brutes' whose 'neigh can be very irritating' and, whom, with 'their long noses stuck in nosebags', seemingly inhabit an ideal state of ontological poverty where they do not have to 'care about anything' (*U* 5.216-220). In these contradictions, we find more than a hint of the suggestion that Bloom's relation to animals is determined not so much by their presence, but, rather, by his prevailing mood anthropomorphically colouring his perception.

The whatness of 'Eumaeus'

The question of the ontological essence of things is forever at stake in *Ulysses*. In 'Scylla and Charybdis' Stephen draws on an equine example while thinking about questions of essence, musing over the notion that 'Horseness is the whatness of all horse' (*U* 9.84-85), which, as Gifford and Seidman gloss, is a 'Platonic proposition that implies that individual horses are imperfect approximations of the idea 'horse''.[40] Yet in *Ulysses* this question of essence is also a question of language too, with language's tendency to anthropomorphically influence perception posing problems around our access to such ontological essences and, indeed, throwing the very notion of essentialism itself into question. As Stephen's Platonic example suggests, such questions have a bearing on interspecies relations as well. In 'Eumaeus', Bloom and Stephen's encounter with the sweeper horse, who, as already stated, is presented through a series of nineteenth-century colloquialisms that yoke the animal to its labour, provides an example of Joyce's interrogating the anthropomorphic agency of language to shape

our encounters with the animals around us and presents the dangers of mistaking relationality for essence. The encounter with the sweeper horse arrives at the tail end of the episode, at which point the reader has become familiar with having to navigate what Karen Lawrence describes as the 'pretentious, verbose, and cliched' style of 'Eumaeus'.[41] For Lawrence, the episode's verbosity succeeds in producing a language that in its attempt to 'modify and amplify' manages only to 'glanc[e] off its subject'.[42] In all of these respects, the encounter with the sweeper horse in the episode's closing moments represents the culmination of a sustained foray into questions of language and relationality that surround human-animal relations.

Although Joyce assigned the symbol of the horse to 'Nestor' in the schema of the novel he produced for Stuart Gilbert[43], in both style and content 'Eumaeus' is steeped in Victorian, and, by extension, equine, culture. Indeed, the cab shelter where the episode largely takes place is itself a signifier of human and horse labour. Cab shelters were a common feature of British and Irish cities, usually run by retired cabmen and offering non-alcoholic refreshments, providing necessary rest not only for humans but the animal machines upon whose labour the modern city relied.[44] The horses are, of course, absent from the shelter itself, or rather, present once more only in their absence, since much of the talk in the episode touches on horses, from the sailor's tale of encountering a Peruvian maneater 'stark ballocknaked eating a dead horse's liver raw' (*U* 16.470-81) to Bloom's reading the results of the Gold Cup in the paper. These figurations stand in for the real horses, described only when awakened by the sailor who, going for a piss, awakens a 'horse of the cabrank' with the men in the shelter hearing as a 'hoof scooped […] for new foothold after sleep and harness jingled' (*U* 16.940-41). Even before Bloom and Stephen have reached the shelter, in the opening moments of the episode, we find equine overtones in the description of the 'distinctly fetid atmosphere of the livery stables' (*U* 16.22) on Beaver Street near the farrier's shop. Similarly, the passing of a 'fourwheeler, probably engaged by some fellows inside on the spree' (*U* 16.26-27) establishes a structural contrast to the sweeper horse with which the episode will close. The appearance of the destitute John Corley, who declares that 'I don't give a shite anyway so long as I get a job, even as a crossing sweeper' (*U* 16.202-03) also foreshadows the sweeper horse at the episode's close, while his assertion of having seen Bloom a 'few times in the Bleeding Horse in Camden Street with Boylan, the billsticker' (*U* 16.198-99) presents a further equine allusion. As David Piwinski has argued, the name of the pub 'evokes a cluster of equine images and associations linking Molly Bloom with Blazes Boylan and […] anticipates the metaphor of a menstruating Molly as a "bleeding horse"' in "Penelope".[45] For Piwinski, Bloom's cuckoldry is associated with the aural refrain of the jingling horse harnesses of 'Sirens' that remind him of the jingling bed quoits of 7 Eccles

Street, an aspect of his psyche that becomes magnified in the association between horses and women in 'Circe'.[46] Yet, the reference also contains a violent image of animal labour that would have been familiar to Joyce's Dublin readers. In a chapter of his 1845 novel *The Cock and the Anchor* entitled 'The Bleeding Horse', Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu describes how 'facing the road, was the inn door, over which hung a painted panel, representing a white horse, out of whose neck there spouted a crimson cascade, and underneath, in large letters, the traveller was informed that this was the genuine old "Bleeding Horse"'.[47] Joyce would have surely had in mind the pub's famously lurid signage (which, as of writing, continues to display a cut throat horse above its entrance[48]), establishing a further equine allusion, and contributing to the episode's backdrop of living machines that present the horse as at once everywhere and nowhere, essential and yet disposable.

Given the equine setting and the degree to which horses have been repeatedly foregrounded through their absence, or the way in which they are perceived only through the labour they produce rather than in themselves, the reader might expect the encounter with the sweeper-horse at the episode's end to be a redemptive moment of empathetic recognition. Indeed, given, as Cheng points out, Bloom has been established as a 'dark horse' over the course of the novel, both in the sense of his capacity to surprise and his perceived racial otherness, readers attuned to Joyce's animals might even hope for a moment of identification between Bloom and the sweeper horse.[49] Yet, the horse arrives as an intrusion welcomed neither by Bloom nor Stephen. '[D]ragging a sweeper' and 'brushing a long swathe of mire' (*U* 16.1771-72), the horse is introduced as an intrusion into language, the noise of its labour forcing a lull in the men's conversation and demanding their attention. This is followed by a moment of syntactical ambiguity that mirrors the moment in 'Wandering Rocks': 'the horse slowly swerved to turn, which perceiving, Bloom, who was keeping a sharp lookout, plucked the other's sleeve gently, jocosely remarking: Our lives are in peril tonight. Beware of the steamroller' (*U* 16.1777-80). Inviting the reader to initially read the perceiving subject as either Bloom or the horse, it is a moment where the episode's laboured prose makes us hesitate before both possibilities simultaneously, producing a further moment of more-than-human doubled perception. Although Bloom's first response is to rely on the cliché of the horse as machine, he is nonetheless forced to pause and consider it further:

> They thereupon stopped. Bloom looked at the head of a horse not worth anything like sixtyfive guineas, suddenly in evidence in the dark quite near so that it seemed new, a different grouping of bones and even flesh because palpably it was a fourwalker, a hipshaker, a blackbuttocker, a taildangler, a headhanger putting his hind foot foremost the while the lord of his creation sat on the

> perch, busy with his thoughts. But such a good poor brute he was sorry he hadn't a lump of sugar but, as he wisely reflected, you could scarcely be prepared for every emergency that might crop up. He was just a big nervous foolish noodly kind of a horse, without a second care in the world. But even a dog, he reflected, take that mongrel in Barney Kiernan's, of the same size, would be a holy horror to face. But it was no animal's fault in particular if he was built that way like the camel, ship of the desert, distilling grapes into potheen in his hump. Nine tenths of them all could be caged or trained, nothing beyond the art of man barring the bees. Whale with a harpoon hairpin, alligator tickle the small of his back and he sees the joke, chalk a circle for a rooster, tiger my eagle eye. These timely reflections anent the brutes of the field occupied his mind somewhat distracted from Stephen's words while the ship of the street was manoeuvring and Stephen went on about the highly interesting old. (*U* 16.1781-99)

The horse's intrusion into Bloom's thoughts might at first plausibly seem to be a moment of ethical recognition, following what philosopher Matthew Calarco describes as the origins of ethics in 'an interruption of my egoism coming from the face of an Other that transforms my being in the direction of generosity'.[50] Calarco, expanding on the phenomenology of Emmanuel Levinas, for whom an encounter with the face of the Other is not only at the foundation of ethics but being itself, suggests a genuine ethics will always be 'agnostic' insofar as 'we cannot know in advance where the face begins and ends […] [and] we are obliged to proceed from the possibility that *anything* might take on a face'.[51] For Calarco, this agnosticism means we should remain open to encountering the face of the animal other. Indeed, it follows that not seeing the face of the Other is a refusal to see or perceive the Other *as* Other. Yet, it is notable that Bloom sees not the horse's face, but rather its 'head'. It is an important distinction. The focus on the head is not only less suggestive of personhood than a face, but doubles as a unit of measurement within both agriculture (heads standing in for numbers of animals) and horse-racing (where close wins are measured by heads). Given this, the fact that Bloom turns to an economic assessment of the horse before, finally, considering its welfare is not surprising. Stripping the horse to the constitutive parts useful to the labour it performs produces a further moment of Victorian pastiche. The description of the horse as 'a fourwalker, a hipshaker, a blackbuttocker, a taildangler, a headhanger' presents a discernible echo of the opening of Dickens's *Hard Times* (1854) where schoolmaster Thomas Gradgrind's star pupil Bitzer offers a definition of the horse in a similarly anatomically reductive and telegraphed style as a 'Quadruped. Graminivorous. Forty teeth, namely twenty-four grinders, four eye-teeth, and twelve incisive. Sheds coat in the spring; in marshy countries, sheds hoofs, too. Hoofs hard, but requiring to be shod with iron. Age known by marks in mouth'.[52] If, as Oritz-Robles suggests, Dickens's description captures the moment of transition when the horse became 'an industrial engine',

then Bloom's face to face encounter suggests a reversion to the anthropomorphic Victorian conventions of language and identity that created the conditions for the horse to be reduced to living machine in the first place.[53]

Although Bloom does eventually consider the horse's welfare, readers hoping for a moment of genuine trans-species empathy may also feel dismayed at the seemingly shallow sentimentalism of Bloom's concern for the 'nervous foolish noodly kind of a horse, without a second care in the world' (*U* 16.1789-90), a sickly-sweet satire of Victorian animal welfare movements. Hugh Kenner once suggested that in 'Eumaeus' the reader is plausibly reading a style of writing that Bloom might have himself produced, an idea given weight by the episode's attention to hospitality and virtue, all of which have been associated with Bloom in earlier episodes.[54] In such a reading, Bloom's fleeting sympathy for the 'brutes of the field' (*U* 16.1797) and the rapidity with which he returns to his discussion with Stephen about music might be read as reflecting the perceived shallowness and sentimentality not only of professed concern for animal welfare, but Victorian ideals of hospitality and virtue more generally. In this, we might hear an echo of Bloom's earlier comment that '[a] revolution must come on the due instalment plan' (*U* 16.1101), with his concerns for animal welfare amounting to a general discomfort with animal labour only when unavoidably faced with it, and an inability or unwillingness to contemplate what social action might follow a meaningful empathetic response. The authentic or genuine moment of trans-species identification that Calarco argues is central to an animal ethics does not occur, despite, as the episode shows us, all the conditions being present for it to take place.

Ironically, however, it is precisely through Bloom's failure to return the gaze of the horse and open himself to a moment of empathetic identification that the text makes its own ethical gesture. As Lawrence argues of the style of 'Eumaeus', the use of cliché presents 'a system of classification through which life in all its complexity is forced' and 'organize[s] the world in terms of type and generalisation that belie the contingency of individual fact'.[55] The reader is not only invited to read the episode against the grain, alert to what is not being told, but moreover, as Lawrence suggests, is being shown how linguistic conventions obfuscate and distort how we relate to the world more generally. Linguistic shortcomings are particularly apparent in the moments where the episode's syntax appears to strain and struggle to clearly convey meaning. Before Bloom begins to reel off his description of the horse's attributes, we are told that the horse was 'suddenly in evidence in the dark quite near so that it seemed new' (*U* 16.1782-83). Here, in the moments before Bloom resorts to ready-made colloquialisms that strip the horse of its personhood, we find a textual rendering of what Calarco describes as how the ethical encounter with the Other is 'radically disruptive and not easily captured by thought'.[56] The horse in its emergence, presented in terms of

darkness and newness, is momentarily glimpsed by the reader before cliché takes over and assimilates it within well-worn figures that resist recognition of the animal as Other.

There is an irony, too, that Bloom's instinctive recourse to cliché presents him, rather than the horse, in mechanical terms. Socially conditioned to reel out a range of tired and inadequate phrases, Bloom enacts a Pavlovian response to the equine stimulus. Yet, *Ulysses* does not suggest that a more authentic or ethical language might exist. After-all, earlier when Stephen calls to mind Plato's ideal that 'Horseness is the whatness of all horse' (*U* 9.84-85) it is in the context of his suspicion towards the Platonic idealism being espoused by the others in the National Library. And as his question to Bloom in 'Eumaeus' of 'What's in a name?' suggests, the relationship between words and the things they stand for is neither natural nor self-evident, not least since 'Sounds are impostures' (*U* 16.362-64). Instead, throughout *Ulysses* we are shown how the 'whatness' of the ideal 'horse' is a contested site of abstraction, disunity and occlusion. Through grammatical ambiguity, syntactical strain and recourse to pastiche, Joyce consciously resists allowing the reader to feel they have glimpsed the inner life of the animal but, rather, insists on the inability of language to ever adequately capture the ontological essence of other species. In so doing, *Ulysses* gestures to what Derrida terms the 'absolute alterity' of animals.[57] This is an alterity which can never be viewed directly but only misrepresented or fleetingly glimpsed through moments of disunity that we find in the novel's formal irony or in the gaps produced by words that are labouring so hard to show us the animal that they begin to come apart.[58] Anthropomorphism takes on a doubled aspect, reminding the reader that human-animal relations are necessarily mediated through socio-cultural linguistic conventions but also that, in becoming aware of these conventions, we might guard ourselves against mistaking relationality for essence. Anthropomorphism, in this sense, takes on a productive rather than inherently negative, capacity.

Instead of suggesting that an authentic face-to-face encounter with animal Others is possible, *Ulysses* points to moments of intersubjectivity where language strains for sufficiency. For Derrida, in his final seminars, it is precisely in the domain of the unrecognisable that we might find an interspecies ethics. An ethics that relies on recognition, Derrida argues, 'remains human' insofar as it knows in advance how the face of the Other should appear and therefore 'remains dogmatic, narcissistic, and not yet thinking'.[59] In contrast, that which is 'unrecognisable' and therefore 'non-fellow' threatens the ontological (and, by extension, linguistic) categories that would otherwise limit who we feel a sense of obligation or responsibility towards.[60] Yet, in *Ulysses*, anthropomorphism and alterity, or the recognisable and the unrecognisable, cannot be so easily distinguished. And, perhaps

more importantly, the two don't quite translate into the ethical distinctions that Derrida suggests. In 'Hades', Bloom's gloomy state of mind might mean that he anthropomorphises the cemetery horses, in the sense that his mood inflects how he perceives them, but this produces a moment of seemingly genuine empathy based on (mis)recognition and suggests the potential for anthropomorphism as the basis for an ethical response. Similarly, Bloom's failure to meaningfully respond to the horse at the end of 'Eumaeus' does not hinge on the fact of anthropomorphism in and of itself. While the episode makes clear that we cannot rest easy in an anthropomorphic view of animals as living machines, it does not suggest that we can simply cut through language and representation to a more ethical set of relations premised on absolute non-recognition and pure alterity. Instead, in 'Eumeaus', the sweeper horse's laboured anthropomorphic rendering and the moments where the text seems to strain under its own weight offer a variation of what Calarco describes as how 'ethical experience occurs where … relationality is interrupted' and is fundamentally 'unanticipatable'.[61] In this sense, the novel might be read as offering something resembling a literary theory of animal life ready to intervene in the epistemological, ontological and ethical debates around anthropomorphism in the field of animal studies. Joyce's labouring to capture that sense where, in our encounters with animals, language seems on the point of failure situates *Ulysses* as a novel actively theorising what it means to live in a multispecies modernity.

Notes

1. James Joyce, *Ulysses: The Corrected Text*, ed. Hans Walter Gabler with Wolfhard Steppe and Claus Melchior (London: Penguin Books, 1986), episode 16, lines 1784-85. Subsequent citations will be given parenthetically with episode number plus line number.
2. Don Gifford and Robert J Seidman, *Ulysses Annotated: Notes for James Joyce's Ulysses* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986), 561.
3. Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 236.
4. David Rando, 'The Cat's Meow: *Ulysses*, Animals, and the Veterinary Gaze', *James Joyce Quarterly*, 46.3–4 (2009), 529–43 (532). For another early and important piece of work on Joyce and animals see Maud Ellmann, '*Ulysses*: Changing into an Animal', *Field Day Review*, 2 (2006), 74–94. Katherine Ebury's 2018 special issue of the journal *Humanities* on 'Joyce, Animals and the Nonhuman' was the first collection of articles to focus on the topic and, more recently, Yoshimi Minamiani has offered the first extended analysis of animal life in Joyce's work in his doctoral thesis *James Joyce and Modern Animals: Reconstruction of Dublin's Denizens* (Hitotsubashi University, 2019). For accounts of how animals figure more broadly within the development of modernist culture see Carrie Rohman, *Stalking the Subject: Modernism and the Animal* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009) and Caroline

Hovanec, *Animal Subjects: Literature, Zoology and British Modernism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

5. Derek Ryan, *Animal Theory: A Critical Introduction* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015), 13.
6. Vinciane Despret, *What Would Animals Say If We Asked the Right Questions?*, trans. by Brett Buchanan (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016).
7. Mario Oritz-Robles, *Literature and Animal Studies* (London & New York: Routledge, 2018), xi.
8. Ibid., 2-3.
9. Jacques Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, trans. David Wills, ed. by Marie-Louise Mallet (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 32.
10. Haraway's term builds on Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's notion of 'becoming animal' which she criticises for not paying enough attention to the lives of 'actual' animals. Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 208.
11. Ronan Crowley, 'Looking at Animals without Seeing Them: Havelock Ellis in the "Circe" Episode of *Ulysses*', *Humanities*, 6.3 (2017) <https://www.mdpi.com/2076-0787/6/3/73>
12. Ryan, *Animal Theory*, 43.
13. Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press), 99.
14. 'labour | labor, v.' *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, September 2020. Web. 10 November 2020.
15. Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 75.
16. Oritz-Robles, *Literature and Animal Studies*, 29.
17. James Joyce, *Poems and Exiles*, ed. J.C.C. Mays (London: Penguin Books, 1992), 39. For analysis of Joyce's interest in animal life in his epiphanies see Katherine Ebury, 'Becoming-Animal in the Epiphanies: Joyce Between Fiction and Non-Fiction', *Joyce's Non-Fiction Writings: Outside His Jurisfiction*, eds. Katherine Ebury and James Alexander Fraser (Cham: Palgrave MacMillan, 2018): 175–94.
18. An araby is an Arabian horse, with Gerber tracing the noun's usage back to the twelfth century. Richard Gerber, 'The Horses of "Araby"', *Joyce Studies Annual* 2018, 245-49.
19. James Joyce, *Finnegans Wake*, eds. Robbert-Jans Henkes, Erik Bindervoet and Finn Fordham (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 223.
20. Vincent Cheng, *Joyce, Race, And Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 255-6.
21. Ibid., 252. It is also worth bearing in mind that Joyce was writing during and after the First World War, in which millions of horses (and other animals) were slaughtered on the battlefields.
22. For analysis of Joyce and horse racing see Carl F. Miller '"Result of the Rockinghorse Races": The Ironic Culture of Racing in Joyce's *Ulysses* and Lawrence's "The Rocking-Horse Winner"', *Modernists at Odds: Reconsidering Joyce and Lawrence*, eds. Matthew J Kochis and Heather L Lusty (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2015), 210–28. Vivien Igoe has offered historical details for all the named racing horses in *Ulysses*, see Igoe, '"Spot the Winner": Some of the Horse in *Ulysses*', *Dublin James Joyce Journal* 4 (2011), 72-86. More general accounts of horses in *Ulysses* also tend to focus on the military and racing horses: see for instance, Friedhelm Rathjen, 'Horse Versus Cattle in *Ulysses*', *Joyce Studies Annual* 12 (2001), 172-75; and

Rafael I. García Leon, 'Reading *Ulysses* at a Gallop', *Papers on Joyce* 3 (1997), 3-8. For a broader overview of the influence of horses on Victorian culture see Gina M. Dorré, *Victorian Fiction and the Cult of the Horse* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2008).

23. Clay McShane and Joel A. Tarr, *The Horse in the City: Living Machines in the Nineteenth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), x.
24. Donna Haraway, *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness* (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2003), 31. On the development of the human morphology during this period see Vybarr Cregan-Reid, 'Ecologies of Labour: The Anthropocene Body as a Body of Work', *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century* 26 <https://www.doi.org/10.16995/ntn.815>
25. Elaine Walker, *Horse* (London: Reaktion Books, 2008), 152.
26. Virginia Woolf, *Moments of Being*, ed. Jeanne Schulkind (London: Grafton Books, 1989), 134-35.
27. Woolf, *Moments of Being*, 134; Walker, *Horse*, 152.
28. W.J. Gordon, *The Horse World of London* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1893), 34.
29. Peter Adkins, 'The Eyes of That Cow: Eating Animals and Theorizing Vegetarianism in James Joyce's *Ulysses*', *Humanities* 6.3 (2017). <https://doi.org/10.3390/h6030046>
30. Salting horses was, Gifford and Seidman outline, a treatment in which horses were treated with 'T.C., a substance derived from the "virus of tuberculosis"'. Its effectiveness, however, is unclear. Gifford and Seidman, *Ulysses* Annotated, 38. Debates around whether Joyce penned an unsigned editorial on foot and mouth disease in the *Freeman's Journal* are ongoing, see most recently, Terence Killeen, 'On the authorship of a Freeman sub-editorial', *James Joyce Online Notes* 16 (2020).
31. James Joyce, *Dubliners*, ed. Terence Brown (London: Penguin Books, 1992), 13.
32. James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, ed. Jeri Johnson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 72.
33. James Scannell, 'From Horse Drawn Trams to LUAS: A Look at Public Transport in Dublin from the 1870's to the Present Time', *Dublin Historical Record* 59.1 (2006), 5–18 (8-9).
34. One of the monthly journals dedicated to the promotion of the automobile was called *The Horseless Age*, signalling the degree to which modern transport was explicitly framed in terms of the absence of animal power. I am grateful to Daniel J. Bowman, who is completing a PhD on animals in automotive culture at the University of Sheffield, for drawing this journal to my attention.
35. James Joyce, *Ulysses: A Critical and Synoptic Edition*, prepared by Hans Walter Gabler with Wolfhard Steppe and Claus Melchior (New York: Garland Publishing, 1984), vol 1, 476.
36. McShane and Tarr, *Horse in the City*, 2.
37. I analyse this passage in some detail in 'The Eyes of That Cow'.
38. Cheng, *Joyce, Race and Empire*, 258-59.
39. See Derrida on Heidegger, for instance, in the twelfth chapter of *The Beast and the Sovereign*, vol. 1, trans. Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).
40. Gifford and Seidman, *Ulysses Annotated*, 199.

41. Lawrence, *The Odyssey of Style in Ulysses* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 166.
42. Ibid., 166.
43. The schema Joyce produced for Carl Linati does not feature any equine references.
44. Gordon writes that by 1890 there were more than 600 cab stands in London. *The Horse-World of London*, 41-42.
45. David J Piwinski. 'The Image of the Bleeding Horse in James Joyce's *Ulysses*', *Papers on Language & Literature* 26.2 (1990): 285–288 (285).
46. Ibid., 286-87. On this topic see also Laura Lovejoy. 'The Bestial Feminine in *Finnegans Wake*', *Humanities* 6.3 (2017). <https://doi.org/10.3390/h6030058>
47. Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, *The Cock and Anchor* (London: Downey & Co., 1895), 45.
48. See www.bleedinghorse.ie.
49. Cheng, *Joyce, Race and Empire*, 259-60.
50. Matthew Calarco, 'Toward an Agnostic Animal Ethics', *The Death of the Animal: A Dialogue*, ed. Paola Cavalieri (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009): 73–84 (78).
51. Ibid., 79. Emphasis in original.
52. Charles Dickens, *Hard Times*, ed. Paul Schilke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 9-10. Dickensian allusions can be found throughout 'Eumaeus'.
53. Oritz-Robles, *Literature and Animal Studies*, 41.
54. Hugh Kenner, *Ulysses* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1980), 130.The opening sentence of the episode introduces the 'orthodox Samaritan fashion' (*U* 16.3) which will come to colour all of what follows.
55. Lawrence, *The Odyssey of Style*, 174.
56. Calarco, 'Agnostic Ethics', 81.
57. Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, 11.
58. In this respect, Joyce's formal aesthetic mirrors what Haraway in *When Species Meet* describes as the way in which 'encounterings do not produce harmonious wholes, and smoothly preconstituted entities do not ever meet in the first place' (287).
59. Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign*, vol.1, 108.
60. Ibid., 108.
61. Calarco, 'Agnostic Ethics', 79.

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